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CHAPMAN FAMILY

by

Mrs. Harriet R. Hamilton

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From the Library of the
P. M. A. N.

Chapman Family

Benjamin

In the summer of 1896, the writer, a granddaughter of the Rev. Benjamin Chapman, accompanied by her son, visited the former homes and haunts of the earlier members of the Chapman family; and from town records, tombstones and conversation with some very old people of the different places visited, most of the materials for this little sketch were gathered.

THE NAME CHAPMAN.

"The Chapmans were distinguished in earliest times—from 1298 on. In 1534 one Thomas Chapman took the oath of fidelity on taking the chair of Sacred Theology in London."

General History of the Chapman Family.

"Young, in his history of Whitby, England, says, 'Chapmans resided at Whitby, previous to the year 1400.'"

Register Whitby Abbey.

"Sir Thomas Chapman and Admiral Chapman of Sweden, were settled near Whitby at the time of Henry III., and were prosecuted and imprisoned for maintaining their rights and privileges, but were soon set at liberty without paying fees."

Old English Manuscript.

"As a stigma attached to those who left their country under the banner of Puritanism, the same care was not taken to retain their names in family registers, as with those who stayed in England. They were soon forgotten. Hence the difficulty of tracing any connection between early settlers of our country and their ancestors in the fatherland. 'The

majority of Puritan settlers were in the morning of life, and consequently had had no opportunity to distinguish themselves in any way which would be matter of record."

General History of the Chapman Family.

"In 1853 there were at least twenty clergymen in England by the name of Chapman."

"100,000 bear the name of Chapman in America."

". . . Men of undaunted courage, indomitable resolution, firm religious principles, superior mental cultivation ; men from whom their descendants need not blush to have derived their name."

"Just men they were, and all their study bent to worship God aright, and know his works—not hid—nor those things least which might preserve freedom and peace to man."

General History of the Chapman Family.

REVEREND BENJAMIN CHAPMAN.

HIS PARENTAGE AND PERSONALITY.



Captain Benjamin Chapman was born at Norwich, Conn., June 28th, 1736. He died at Plainfield, New Hampshire, January 20th, 1802. He married at Norwich, Conn., Jemina Gates, of Preston, Conn., September 16th, 1756. She was born April 16th, 1735, and died April 4th, 1812. They had eleven children.*

Dr. Joseph Chapman, born at Preston, Conn., December 12th, 1757. Died at Cornish, New Hampshire, April 3rd, 1810.

Rev. Benjamin Chapman, born at Preston, Conn., August 29th, 1759. Died July 13th, 1804, at Edgecomb, Maine.

Cyrus Chapman, born at Preston, Conn., July 11th, 1760. Died at Preston, Feb. 26th, 1763.

* Record taken from old family Bible, formerly belonging to Col. Levi Chapman, of Albany, N. Y.

*Captain Chester Chapman, born at Preston, Conn., December 30th, 1762. Died at Bethel, Vermont, February 8th, 1818.

Sarah Chapman, born at Preston, Conn., September 11th, 1765. Died at Plainfield, New Hampshire, June 28th, 1767.

*Jemima Chapman, born at Plainfield, New Hampshire, November 3d, 1767. Died at Dotham, Vermont, December, 1856. Married Simon Blanchard.

Cyrus Chapman (2nd), born at Plainfield, New Hampshire, May 5th, 1769. Died at Tunbridge, Vermont, May 22nd, 1853.

Rebecca Chapman, born at Plainfield, New Hampshire, April 3d, 1772. Died at Cornish, New Hampshire, June 10th, 1794.

Col. Isaac Chapman, born at Plainfield, New Hampshire, June 8th, 1774. Died at Plainfield, New Hampshire, January 20th, 1824.

Elizabeth Chapman, born at Plainfield, August 17th, 1776. Died at Bethel, Vermont, May 30th, 1797.

* There is living at Royalton, (near Bethel) Vermont, at this date (November, 1897) Mrs. Sarah Blanchard Chapman, daughter of Mrs. Jemima Chapman Blanchard. Her husband, Cyrus Chapman, son of Captain Chester, was her own cousin. She is a most remarkable specimen of hardy New England womanhood. Not only has she retained to a remarkable degree all her faculties, but she writes at the present date a letter which would do credit to many forty years younger. She celebrated her 95th birthday a few months since, and is now in excellent health, bidding fair to live to celebrate her centenary birthday.

Col. Levi Chapman, born at Plainfield, New Hampshire, June 3d, 1781. Died at Albany, New York, April 4th, 1865.



Of Captain Benjamin Chapman's life before going to Plainfield, little is known. He moved from Preston, Conn., to Plainfield, about the year 1766.

The Town Records at Plainfield are full of Captain Benjamin Chapman's name. He was repeatedly chosen as selectman, apparently acting in that capacity most of his life there. His name first occurs in a tax list in the year 1768, and a large and beautiful tract of land owned by him was shown the writer. After this his name appears on nearly every page of the records, until about a year previous to his death. He seems to have been on every important committee, and a very active and prominent man of the place. A copy of one of the records is as follows :

“At a meeting held April 14th, 1777. It was voted, among other things, to grant a tax of fourteen pounds, current money, to each man that

shall enlist in the town for three years in the Continental Army.

Signed,

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN, JOSIAH KIMBALL, JOSIAH RUSSELL,	}	Committee."
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Records of his election as selectman occur over and over again ;—1769, 1770, 1778, 1779, and many other times. He was also elected delegate to a convention at Hanover, December 27th, 1785. Also "agent to lay town accounts before General Assembly at next session."—January 23d, 1786.

Another record stands as follows :

"These are, agreeable to the vote of the Committee, when met at the house of Francis Smith, Esq., on the twenty-sixth day of July last, to notify the inhabitants of the town of Plainfield to meet at the house of Mr. Nathaniel Dean, in South Town, on Monday, the seventh day of August current, at two of the clock in the afternoon, on same day, in order to choose a committee to meet committee of the several towns on the river, from Walpole and Haverhill on South river, and including Walpole and Haverhill, on Thursday, the 10th day of August current, at the house of Francis Smith, Esq., in order to consult such measures as may be proper, and screen the frontier against a future invasion."

Given under our hand, in Plainfield, the first day of August, 1775.

FRANCIS SMITH, BENJAMIN KIMBALL, BENJAMIN CHAPMAN, JOSIAH RUSSELL, AMOS STAFFORD,	}	Committee of Safety.
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In the Revolutionary war rolls,* kept in Cornish, (which township adjoins Plainfield and where one of Captain Benjamin Chapman's sons resided) the writer found records of the service in the army at several different times of Benjamin Chapman, and also of his son, Benjamin Chapman, Jr. Col. Chase's regiment was made up entirely of Plainfield and Cornish men, and the records stand as follows :

" Benjamin Chapman, in Col. Jonathan Chase's regiment of New Hampshire militia, which went and re-inforced the Continental Army at Ticonderoga, by Major Folsom's orders, May 7th, 1777. Served as Drummer from June 18th till July 31st, receiving £8, 4, 2."

"Captain Russell's return, from General

* War records confirmed in detail by the State Historiographer, (A. H. Batcheller) Editor State papers, Littleton, New Hampshire.

Chase's papers. A return of Captain Russell's company, with name annexed.

Plainfield--Benjamin Chapman. Drum.

May 3d, to June 20th, in ye whole 48 days."

" Plainfield men at Saratoga. Licut. Reuben Jerrold, return of the men that marched from Plainfield to Sallatogue in Col. Chase's record, in September 26th, 1777, with their names.

Drum, Benjamin Chapman, service 32 days."

" Benjamin Chapman, Jr., served in Jonathan Chase's regiment in Capt. Joshua Heyward's company, raised to re-inforce the Continental Army in New York, from December 20th, 1776, till March 1st, 1777, receiving one month's pay, £3 ; fees for travelling 276 miles, £2, 4, 2 ; total £5, 4, 2."

The writer was unable to learn why the elder Benjamin was always called Captain. Further search among the war records might have discovered the reason, or he may simply have been Captain of some militia company. His name stands so recorded, however, both in all town records and on his tombstone.

A grand-daughter* of Doctor Joseph Chapman, living in Plainfield, accompanied the writer to their great-grandfather's grave.

The tombs of Captain Benjamin Chapman and his wife, and of one little daughter, Sarah, (who died at the age of 1 year and 9 months) and also of Mrs. Jemima Blanchard, another daughter, (who died January 8th, 1857, aged 89 years and 2 months) lie in an elevated part of the township of Plainfield, on the extreme summit of a high hill or knoll, entirely hidden from the road below.

There are few graves there, probably not more than a dozen. Old pine trees shade the lovely spot, and one can imagine no more beautiful resting place. The inscriptions on the plain old slabs of stone, marking the place, are still so distinct as to be read without difficulty. They are as follows :

In memory of
CAPTAIN BENJAMIN CHAPMAN,
Who died January 20th, 1802.
Aged 65 Years.

Death o'er the mortal part shall reign,
The grave the body will retain
'Till Christ the fearful bonds shall burst,
And raise to life the sleeping dust."

* Mrs. Belle Chapman Stone.

In memory of
MRS. JEMIMA CHAPMAN,
Wife of CAPTAIN BENJAMIN CHAPMAN,
Who died April 14th, 1812.
Aged 77 Years.

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
'Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

Rev. Benjamin was the second son of Captain Benjamin Chapman. Of his early life very little has been brought to light. From the war records, however, we find that in his eighteenth year during the hard winter of 1776-7 he served from December until March in the forces of the Continental army. Knowing as we do the privations and sufferings endured during that winter by our Continental troops, can we wonder that in all later reports of Mr. Chapman's life, we hear of him always as in feeble health? Or is it strange that in later years, this weakness eventually developed into consumption?

Hanover, New Hampshire, is situated about twelve miles from Plainfield,* the home of the Chapmans. Here (at Hanover) Dartmouth College is

* Plainfield, New Hampshire, (which is, it should be remembered, a town, not a village) is easily reached from Windsor, Vermont, the nearest railway station, by a beautiful six mile drive along the banks of the Connecticut river.

located, and here Benjamin, Jr., or as he was known in after years, Rev. Benjamin, was graduated with the degree A. M., in the year 1784; and here, six years afterward, he was married, by the Rev. John Smith, to Carolina Matilda, daughter of Rev. Caleb Fuller and Hannah, his wife, July 10th, 1790.*

Here also his wife returned as widow from Edgecomb, Maine, to the home of her parents, and in Dartmouth College where his father had been

* Among the old manuscripts of the Chapman family—letters, sermons, etc.,—is a copy of an epitaph as follows:

"EPITAPH.

Here lie ye remains of Mrs. Nabby,
Wife of Mr. Benjamin Chapman,
who departed ys life in comfortable hopes of a better,
October 27th, 1788. Aged 21 years.

"Say ye to ye righteous, it shall be well with him."

My lovely spouse lie still and sleep,
Your work is done, your rest is sweet.
My dearest friend, a long adieu,
I wait God's time to follow you. B. C.

(FOOT STONE.)

The remains of Mrs. Nabby Chapman.
"A tender wife, a daughter dear,
A sister kind, a friend sincere."

There has been nothing in the least explanatory, concerning this epitaph, found among any of the old manuscripts. One is quite justifiable, however, in concluding that the epitaph is one on some grave-stone, marking the resting place of Rev. Benjamin Chapman's first wife.

Mr. Chapman was graduated in 1784, at the age of twenty-five. He was not married to Caroline Matilda Fuller until 1790.

As the date on this epitaph is 1788, and the age of the wife but 21 years, it is reasonable to suppose that after a few short months of married life, Mr. Chapman lost his first wife, and that two years afterward he married again.

graduated, educated her only son, Thomas Fuller Chapman. And here in Hanover, in the home of her girlhood, she died, and is buried by the side of her father, mother and sisters.

Of the period between the graduation of the Rev. Benjamin Chapman and his call to Granby, Mass., (four years), the writer could obtain no special information. From old letters and inference, however, there is but little doubt that after two years of theological study, he was filling different pulpits as "stated supply."

"Many congregations, though the members were pious and godly, were pretty sharp in bargaining with their preachers. Often clergymen would supply (or suppleye) from month to month without settling, as they got the "keepe of a horse" and their own board for Saturday and Sunday, and on Monday morning a cash payment for preaching. This was in many cases better than a small yearly salary, that was irregularly and inconveniently paid. . . . The Puritan ministers of New England, in the eighteenth century, were all good whigs. They hated the English kings, fully believing that those stupid rulers were burning with pious zeal to make Episcopacy the established church of the colonies. They were the most eager of republicans and patriots, and many of them were good and brave soldiers in the Revolution. Living low and scrabbling along seems to have been the normal condition of the New England minister for some time after the War of Independence. He

was obliged to go without his pay, or take it in whatever shape it might chance to be tendered. . . . A large portion of the stipends in early parishes were paid in corn, labor, etc., and the amounts were established by fixed rates upon the inhabitants. . . . Often a settlement or sum of money was given outright to the clergyman, when first he was ordained, or settled in the parish. And often one might have a larger settlement and smaller salary, or a smaller settlement and a larger salary according to preference." *

From the 'Town Records in Granby, Mass., the following is copied :

"At a meeting held May 5th, 1788. A call was extended to Mr. Benjamin Chapman to settle in the Gospel ministry. At this meeting it was voted that all persons in the town that were 21 years of age who expect to pay toward the support of a minister be allowed to vote in this meeting, in giving Mr. Chapman a call to settle in the ministry among us. Voted, to give Mr. Benjamin Chapman a call to settle in the Gospel ministry among us. Voted, to give Mr. Chapman, £'s 230 settlement, provided we can agree on terms of payment. Also, that his salary begin at £'s 60, and raise 50 shillings a year until it comes to £'s 80. Also 35 cords of wood. Voted, to pay Mr. Chapman, provided he settle with us, one-half his settlement within the compass of one year, from the time of his set-

* Puritan Sabbaths in New England Alice Morse Earle.

ting, and the other half within the compass of two years. 'This call was not accepted.'

A meeting was called September 18th, 1789, to see if the town would renew the call to Mr. Chapman to settle in the Gospel Ministry. It was again voted at this meeting to allow all male inhabitants, who were 21 years of age, to vote in meeting. Also, Ashabel Bartlett, a minor, was allowed to vote on account of his father's estate. It was voted to renew the call on the same conditions as made in the previous one. A committee of seven, Benjamin Eastman, Ruben Moody, Experience Smith, Timothy Smith, John Preston, Captain Elijah Kent and Joseph Montague, were chosen to confer with Mr. Chapman. By a series of adjournments, the meeting was continued until November 9th when a committee of five men were chosen to confer with Mr. Chapman respecting certain proposals he had laid before the meeting. Another adjournment carried the meeting to November 13th. "Then voted an alteration. An amendment of the vote giving Mr. Chapman 35 cords of wood and in lieu, voted to give him 45 cords of wood annually (provided he wants it). It was voted to pay Mr. Benjamin Chapman £'s 30 of his settlement in hard money, by the middle of May next. Mr. Chapman was now invited to attend the meeting and according to an agreement made with him it was voted to pay Mr. Chapman one-half his salary in neat cattle, grain or building, if he wants it, and the other half in money. It was also agreed

with him to pay one-half his settlement within one year, and the other half within two years of his ordination."

Again Mr. Chapman demurred. And again on February 16th, 1790, the town renewed the call, with the same conditions excepting that one-half of the settlement was to be paid in *lawful* money, the rest in neat cattle, grain or building. This call Mr. Chapman accepted February 16th, 1790, and continued in the pastorate six years, when failing health prevented him from performing his duties as a pastor. The town records show that he was ill much of the time and could not preach.

Granby, Mass., is a township about six or eight miles from Holyoke. Electric cars from Springfield to Holyoke, and a drive through a beautiful country, bring one into Granby. The town records there, beside the foregoing, have the following :

" A record of the children born to Benjamin Chapman and Caroline Matilda, his wife :

Their son, Newton Whittlesey Chapman,
Born May 27th, 1792.

Their son, Thomas Fuller Chapman,
Born February 25th, 1794.

Their son, Newton Whittlesey Chapman,
Died September 18th, 1794.
Aged 2 yrs. and 3 mos."

The writer could find no record of the birth of the younger children, Abigail Storrs, Caroline Matilda, or Benjamin, who died in infancy in Edgecomb, Maine.

Old letters are in evidence, showing that after leaving Granby, the Rev. Benjamin again filled pulpits as "stated supply." As confirming this the following letter is introduced.

Letter addressed to his wife in Cornish, New Hampshire :

" Bath, October 19th, 1799.

My Dear:

Three weeks have expired since I wrote you, since which time I have supplied Mr. Wallie's pulpit in his absence, and have taken the opportunity as the weather and other circumstances would admit, to visit my brethren in the vicinity. I have been received and treated with a great degree of kindness and attention, and so far as I can judge, wherever I have preached it has been to general acceptance. I expect to preach here to-morrow. Am then engaged two Sabbaths at Boothbay, in Mr. Sawyer's absence. There are vacancies to which I am requested to go, but whether I shall I have not determined. It is most probable that I shall then think of returning home, as the season of the year is quite too far advanced and the weather too severe, to hope to receive much benefit from journeying. I have the greatest reason to bless God that I have experienced the care of a kind Providence in making my way prosperous, in pre-

serving my life and health and above all in giving me seasons of divine support. Oh my dear, how glorious are those consolations which religion affords and in what a lamentable situation are those who are destitute of them! I feel more than ever the importance of living to God. May I be enabled to devote myself, my time, and talents wholly to Him, and his service. May you, my dear, enjoy the divine presence, and know what it is to live near to God. I long to see you and the little babes. May you and they be under the divine care and protection. Remember me in your prayers. Mr. Sawyer will call on you with this letter, and I intend to send you by him, a part of my earnings since I came from home. Give my duty to my parents, and love to my brothers and sisters. Remember me to all inquirers, and accept the most sincere and unfeigned love for yourself and children,

from your loving

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN.

Thursday, Oct. 20th.

My Dear—Am yet in health; have nothing more to add, but commend you and the little ones to God.

With most sincere love,

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN."

While Mr. Chapman was supplying pulpits in different parts of the country, his family returned from Granby to Plainfield, the home of the Chapmans, and where his father was still living. Old

Plainfield people remember many little stories and anecdotes concerning the Rev. Benjamin. A certain saying is current in Plainfield to this day, which originated in the following manner: Parson Chapman, being away from home much of the time on "stated supply" preaching tours, his wife was obliged to take entire charge, not only of the children, but the home. On the occasion of one of his returns, he inquired for the children, and after hearing they were well, said "And how is the pig?" "Pig, pig?" said his wife, "Oh, I forgot there was a pig!" Upon investigation, of course, poor piggy was found dead, and thus "As well cared for as Parson Chapman's pig," became, and still is, a Plainfield adage.

Though still in feeble health, the Rev. Chapman was called to the pastorate of the church in Edgecomb, Maine, July 31st, 1800. And a letter written while "supplying" the pulpit at Edgecomb, and while debating in his mind whether or not he would accept the call, is still in evidence, and is as follows.

Letter addressed to his wife in Plainfield, New Hampshire:

"Edgecomb, Maine,

August 21st, 1800.

My dear and lovely companion :

Your letter of the 21st of July I have received, and am happy that you think so much of one so unworthy of your thoughts. Nothing in this world, my dear, gives me so great pleasure, as to

read those tender expressions of love with which your letters abound. They lighten the burden of absence inconceivably. I feel most sensibly for our situation, and look forward with anxiety when we may have a home of our own, and enjoy each other and our little ones. My letters of the 2nd and 4th, of this instant, will give you a particular account of the proceedings of the town, relative to my continuing with them in the ministry. I have not given an answer. Matters are yet in a train. How I shall give answer I have not determined. I have nothing new to communicate on the subject. I am sorry my dear to hear of your ill health; I hope you will use all proper means to restore it. Keep yourself as free from anxiety as you can. If your health should continue to decline let me know it, and if it be thought best, I will return home immediately. I am sorry to hear of the ill state of brother Isaac's health. If he should journey for his health, I think it would be well for him to journey this way. Give my love to him and tell him I should be very happy to see him at Edgecomb.

I expect to tarry here until about the first of November, whether I settle here or not. * * * Give my love to dear little Nabby. Kiss her for me and tell her Papa is well and will come home by and bye. Give my duty to my parents, and love to my brothers and sisters, and accept the tenderest love of

Your loving

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN."

The township of Edgecomb, Maine, is a large one, scattered over miles of hill and valley. The houses are far apart, and all seem to speak of past generations. The beautiful hills overlook Casco Bay and the Sheepscott river.

Starting from Portland, Maine, it is a ride of about two hours by rail to Wiscasset.* A drive across a bridge, two miles in length, and then across a beautifully wooded Island,† takes one into the township of Edgecomb, on the coast. At the time of the call of Mr. Chapman to settle here, Edgecomb was a much busier and more thriving community than now. The bay was filled with large vessels, (there being at that time an extensive West India trade) and every boy's ambition was to be a sea-captain. There was at least one large manufactory, a comb factory, and many a beautiful comb, handed down as an heir-loom to the present generation, was made here. It will be of interest to some to know that the writer was told by one of the old inhabitants‡ that he distinctly remembered a large comb purchased there, and worn by one of Rev. Benjamin Chapman's

* A house in Wiscasset was pointed out to the writer as having been the home of Samuel E. Smith. This will be of interest only to those Chapmans who remember that Mr. Smith married Miss Butler, own cousin to Mrs. A. S. C. Rowland. He was Governor of the State of Maine about 1850.

† At least one of the houses on this beautiful Island has a romantic history. It is the one which was to have received Marie Antoinette, upon her escape to this country, and to which some of her wardrobe was actually brought, before the plot fell through.

‡ Mr. Rufus Sewall

daughters,* long after her father's death, and when she was teaching in a little district school, and he was one of her pupils. It was in this beautiful old town that Mr. Chapman lived through his last pastorate. He had first preached there the 18th of May, 1800, from Galatians 2nd, 17th and 18th verses. Mr. Chapman's answer to the call from the Edgecomb church is dated September 20th, 1800, and is as follows :

"To the Inhabitants of the Town of Plainfield :

GENTLEMEN : The invitation given me to settle with you in the work of the Gospel ministry, presented by your committee, I have taken into serious and prayerful consideration. And after attending to all circumstances so far as my knowledge enables me and having asked wisdom and direction of Him " who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not," and who alone is able to direct, I have concluded that duty requires me to accept of your invitation to settle with you in the work of the Gospel ministry, reserving to myself six Sabbaths annually for the purpose of journeying and visiting my friends and for the benefit of my health. In coming to this determination I hope it has been my real desire to learn what Providence pointed out as duty, and in the present state of things what course would be best calculated to promote the cause of truth, the interests of the Redeemer's

* Abigail, afterwards married to Jeremiah Rowland.

kingdom and the good of souls. The work I am sensible is great and the consequences depending infinitely important ; for the Gospel, when faithfully dispensed, will prove a Savior of life unto life, or death unto death, and I am not insensible of my own weakness and insufficiency. I hope my dependence is on divine grace for direction and assistance. That it may please God to strengthen me and make me faithful in the discharge of my duty, that He may bless my labors among you to the salvation of souls, and when we have done worshipping God here below we may meet together in Heaven never more to be separated, to unite forever in singing hallelujahs to Him who has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, is the daily prayer of your friend and servant in the Gospel of Christ.

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN.

September 20th, 1800."

Living upon, and owning the island connected with Edgecomb, was one Judge Davis. He was perhaps the most prominent man in many respects, in all that part of the country. For many years Judge Davis kept a diary, concerning everything connected with the township. This was kept so long and so faithfully, that " Esq. Davis' diary " was referred to in order to prove or disprove any reminiscent assertion, and was finally regarded as a very valuable history of that part of the country. This diary, consisting of several large volumes, was taken to New Orleans by one of Judge Davis' de-

scendants and lost, to the great sorrow of Edgcomb people to this day.

Mr. David Thurston, of Portland, Maine,* compiled in the year 1854-5 an exhaustive history of the Lincoln and Kennebec Association of Ministers. This contained a full biographical sketch of the Rev. Benjamin Chapman. Just as it was ready for publication, Mr. Thurston's office, with all in it, was burned to the ground. A mass of local historical data, the result of years of labor, was thus lost.

In aiding Mr. Thurston to obtain information for this history, Mr. Rufus Sewall, of Wiscasset, wrote to Mr. Chapman's daughter, Mrs. Abigail S. Rowland, then living in Cincinnati, and, speaking of what he had already been able to obtain for Mr. Thurston, wrote as follows :

"Esq. Davis in his diary mentions that Mr. Chapman appeared very sick at Captain Clough's, on the head of the island, from which he did not recover so as to be able to preach until the 25th of January, 1801, and which it appears was the occasion of postponing his installation until Wednesday, the 4th of March, 1801."

A copy of an old faded letter is of interest here. It is addressed to

MRS. C. MATILDA CHAPMAN,
Plainfield,
New Hampshire.

* Father of Mr. Brown Thurston, of the same place, also a genealogist.

“Edgecomb, November 20th, 1800.

My Dear Matilda :

How uncertain are all human events, and how little do we know what calculations to make upon time to come ! You are perhaps now indulging the hope that I am installed in Edgecomb, and am on my return home to revisit my dear family and to prepare for removing ; pleasing thought if it were fact, but my dear, how great is the reverse ! Instead of being on my return home, I am confined with sickness. When I wrote you last I wrote that I was unwell. I kept about however, and preached the next Sabbath. Three weeks ago to-day I came over upon the island, as I was to preach here the next Sabbath ; called at the house of Mrs. Clough, intending to tarry over night, which accordingly I did, and the next day found myself unable to proceed. For three or four days I was very sick, but by the blessing of God on the means which were used, I am recovered from that extreme sickness, so much so as to feel considerable comfortable. I sit up most of the day, and walk abroad. I hope on the whole I am gaining, and I pray God that he may restore me to such health as I may be enabled to use it for my dear family and friends. Never before, my dear, did I know what it was to so long to see the dear little children. Oh that God would be pleased, whatever else he denies me of a temporal nature, to grant me this one favor. I have sometimes thought of writing to

you, my dear, to get somebody to fetch you to me. There is no other way that I know of, for you to get here dear, except to get one of my brothers or hire some one else whom you can, to bring you in a sleigh. To hire a man to go from here would be almost impossible. I think it will be best, my dear, for you to engage somebody to come, if you should wish to come, and to make such other preparations for the journey as may be necessary, so that if I should send for you to come, you may come without delay. You shall hear from me frequently my dear, so long as God shall give me strength to write. Give my love to dear little Thomas and Nabby: dear little things, how I do long to see them! And accept, my dear, of the sincerest love of yours,

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN."

Little Benjamin Chapman, the infant son of the Rev. Benjamin, died May 16th, 1802, aged five months. On that day Mr. Chapman preached from Solomon's Song, 5th Chap., 16th verse, and administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

Mr. Chapman's last sickness commenced on the 2nd day of April, 1804, and he died July 13th, 1804, at three o'clock in the afternoon. He was buried July 16th. Rev. John Sawyer, of Boothbay, preached on the occasion. His pall bearers were Rev. Messrs. Sawyer, Ward, Bayley, Riddel, Gillet and Belden.

On July 29th, from his own pulpit a discourse was preached from the text :

“ Moreover I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”

II Peter 1 : 15.

The following extracts are taken from the sermon, still preserved and legible, though yellow with age :

“ These [views of religion] he clearly illustrated and ably defended in the course of his ministry. And he derived unspeakable comfort from them in the view of death. . . . His confidence in them increased as death approached. But a few days before he went to glory we heard him with delight express the most perfect confidence in those doctrines which he had often preached. From this desk your pastor will address you no more. Let the words therefore which he has spoken unto you make a deep and lasting impression on your minds, and hold fast the truth, that no man take your crown.”

Slabs in the old Edgecomb burying ground, well preserved and with inscriptions legible, though all bearing the inevitable marks of time, are still standing. They bear the following inscriptions :

"This stone perpetuates the memory of

THE REV. BENJAMIN CHAPMAN, A. M.,

Whose life as husband, parent and public teacher adorned the
Christian character, and whose death, accompanied by
inward peace and holy confidence, gave testi-
mony to the sure foundation of the
Christian's hope.

He departed this life July 13th, 1804,

Aged 46 years,

After laboring for eighteen years in the Gospel Ministry,
with zeal and fidelity, though with much bodily infirmity:

Erected by his afflicted and disconsolate widow,

Caroline Matilda Chapman,

As a monument of her sincere affection.

"I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel
of God; therefore watch, remember how ye have heard, and
hold fast."

This stone is erected to the memory of

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN,

Son of Benjamin and Caroline Matilda Chapman,
who departed this life May 16th, 1802.

Aged 5 months.

Mr. Chapman died of consumption, and it is thought that added to his apparently weak constitution, he contracted, in moving into a new house which he had built, a severe cold, which ended in his death.

This house is still standing, although somewhat altered. It has been ever since used as a parsonage.

The distance up and down hill, over country roads, from Mr. Chapman's house to his church, (part of which still remains) is quite long, probably three or four miles.

"The meeting houses having usually to accommodate a whole township of scattered farms, were placed on remote and often elevated locations, sometimes being at the very top of a long, steep hill.

The studiously remote and painfully inaccessible locations chosen for the site of many roomy churches, must astonish any observing traveller on the by-roads of New England. The location on a hill-top was chosen and favored for various reasons. Our Puritan ancestors dearly loved a sightly location, and were willing to climb up hill cheerfully, even through bleak New England winters, for the sake of having a meeting house which showed off well and was a proper source of envy to the neighboring villages and country round."*

At the time of Mr. Chapman's ministry in Edgecomb, almost the entire community attended

* The Sabbath in Puritan New England.

church on horseback, the women and children riding on pillions. They attended the morning and also the afternoon service, using the intermission between the two for their lunch and neighborly gossip.

To the old inhabitants of Edgecomb, Mr. Chapman's name is a household word, and his short life among that people seems to have wonderfully endeared him to them all.

Said one : " No name was held in such reverence and love in my father's family as Mr. Chapman's, and no name was so often quoted to us when I was a child ; indeed we hold the memory, both of him and his wife, as an heirloom."

The impression made by hearing such eulogiums, after the lapse of nearly one hundred years, is certainly that of the greatness of goodness.

CAROLINE MATILDA CHAPMAN.

HER FAMILY AND CHILDREN.



After Mr. Chapman's death, his young wife lived on in the new home devoting herself to the care of her little family.

When Abigail, her oldest daughter, was about sixteen years of age, she had charge of a small district school. The little school-house still stands unaltered. She lived, during this period, in the house of the elder Rufus Sewall,* where her father had always been a revered counsellor and friend. The old Sewall homestead, a one-story stone house, though over one hundred and twenty-five years old, remains to this day entirely unaltered,† and one feels, when in the little rooms of the old home, with their low ceilings and quaint windows, as though one were in a sacred atmosphere.

* Mr. Rufus Sewall's father, Mr. Samuel Sewall, succeeded Mr. Chapman in the ministry at Edgecomb.

† It is now occupied by Mrs. Caroline Matilda Ryan, a sister of Mr. Rufus Sewall, of Portland, and a namesake of Mrs. Chapman.

Mrs. Chapman moved back to Hanover, N. H., her girlhood's home, about the year 1808. As her mother died in 1807, it may be supposed that she returned not only for the purpose of educating her son Thomas in the same university where his father had been graduated, but also to make a home for her aged father. The latter died in 1815, about seven years after her return.

Here in the Widow Chapman's home, many students of Dartmouth College, who afterwards became famous, resided. Numerous letters from different graduates, written to Mrs. Chapman, after having left her home and their College, show with what esteem and affection they regarded her.

In visiting Hanover at the present date, one may meet Dr. Leeds, who has been for 37 years pastor of the old Congregational Church on the Campus. The old church itself is over a hundred years old. The interior has been remodelled and made more comfortable, but the exterior remains entirely unaltered. In the old church records is found the name, "Caroline Matilda Fuller." Years after in the same book is recorded :

"Abigail Storrs Chapman."

"Caroline Matilda Chapman."

Dr. Leeds' first funeral sermon in Hanover was at the funeral of Mrs. Rosina F. Markham, daughter of Rev. Caleb Fuller. She died in 1861, aged 91 years.

The old burying ground is within the village, and a very short walk from the Campus. The

singing birds, the tombstones inscribed with so many familiar names, the peculiar quiet even among the bird songs, all tended to give an impressive and long to be remembered hour.

A plain, white, marble slab bears the following inscription :

“MRS. CAROLINE MATILDA,

Wife of

BENJAMIN CHAPMAN.

Obt. June 26th, 1823.

Æt. 52 Years.

She sleeps in Jesus and is blessed.”

That this slab was erected by her son Thomas Fuller is shown by a letter still in evidence as follows :

(Addressed to his sisters in Hanover.)

Paoli, Ind., July 22d, 1823.

My Dear Sisters :

Last mail I received a letter from Mr. Fairfield, bearing date of the 26th of June, containing the melancholy news of the death of our dear mother. Little did I expect so soon to hear of that event. From the intelligence contained in your last, I had partially despaired of her recovery and

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was making every arrangement to return should your next letter affirm the continuation of her disability. Little did I expect when I visited the office Sunday to receive so melancholy intelligence from that part of the country, which I fondly cherished the hope of shortly revisiting, and gladdening the heart of her whom I now can behold no more this side of the "bourne from which no traveller e'er returns." But my dear sisters, let us not give ourselves up to grief and sorrow for the loss of her whom we can never recall, but console ourselves with the thought that she is removed from us and this vain and troublesome world, to be admitted to the presence of Him who so long has been a friend to the widow, and a father to her now orphan children. To think, my dear sisters, that our dear mother is happy, and enjoying the fruits of her well spent life, should have a tendency certainly to reconcile us to our loss. I cannot but feel an inward pleasure when I reflect upon her pious and well spent life, and that she has so faithfully and for so long a period of years served Him, before whom we must all appear at the last day. Another consolation to me is that I have always been to her a good and dutiful son, that I have done all in my power to make her life in this world more comfortable and easy; and that had she lived, I should have done more. It has been for a long time one of my greatest satisfactions that I should be able to make the last days of our mother easy and comfortable, and be able to soothe and com-

fort her declining years ; but she will need none of our assistance now. She is in the hands of a just and wise God, who is able to make her happy above all earthly bliss. What advice to give you I do not at this time know. Would you wish to come to Indiana or stay at Hanover? Should you wish to tarry at Hanover, I will relinquish all claim to any property there is, except some small articles as keepsake. The house I will assist you in fixing, if it is not already finished, and will help you pay any debts that our dear mother left, if they are not too large, and if the creditors will give me time by paying them interest. I wish that you would transmit the amount of debts the estate is owing, as soon as may be convenient. Could we pay the demands, and you have the house and lot clear, it would yield you an income, which, with your own industry and a little assistance from me, would support you handsomely. This we can easily do if the creditors will be favorable. I will hold myself responsible. . . . I wish you to take no steps toward procuring a tombstone. At present it is my intention to have a handsome marble monument erected over mother's grave. Remember me to Aunt Rosina Markham and to Aunt Davis. Mrs. Chapman wishes to be remembered to you. She has shed many tears for her dear mother, as she always called her. The news of her death affected her very sensibly.

My dear sisters, ever your loving brother,

THOS. F. CHAPMAN.

By the side of Mrs. Chapman's grave in the Hanover grave yard, are the resting places of her father, mother and sisters, and others of the family.

Inscriptions on tombstones in the Fuller burial lot at Hanover, N. H. :

"REV. CALEB FULLER,

Died Aug. 20th, 1815,

Aged 80 years.

The righteous hath hope in his death."

"MRS. HANNAH,

Wife of

REV. CALEB FULLER,

Died Jan. 14th, 1807,

Aged 64 years.

To die is gain."

"MRS. ROSINA F. MARKHAM,

Daughter of

REV. CALEB FULLER,

Born November 24th, 1767.

Died July 14th, 1861."

"NANCY,

Wife of

MOSES DAVIS,

Died March 10, 1841,

Ac. 64 years.

There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God,"

"MARIA H.,

Wife of

PHILIP WATSON,

Died May 15th, 1880.

Ac. 72 years and 10 months."

"This stone is erected in memory of

MR. MOSES DAVIS,

Who died July 24th, 1803,

Aged 31 years,

Whose life as husband, parent and friend adorned society, and
whose death gave testimony to the sure founda-
tion of the Christian's hope :

By his afflicted widow,

NANCY DAVIS.

As a monument of her sincere affection.

"And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying,
neither shall there be any more pain, for the
former things have passed away."

The writer visited with Dr. Leeds, Mrs. Markham's old home, and the site of the Chapman's home, since burned down.

She saw in Mrs. Markham's yard old maple trees which were planted by her great grandfather, Mr. Fuller.

In a letter to her son, written in 1851 by Mrs. A. S. Rowland* of Cincinnati, then revisiting Hanover, she remarks; "those beautiful maples in aunt's yard were planted by grand-pa's own hands. They are the largest and most beautiful I ever saw."

In another letter during the same visit, she writes of attending commencement once more, and speaks of the patriotic addresses of some of the students, and the music, "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle," by the band. She also notes that there were forty-three upon whom degrees were conferred. It all, she continues, brought back to memory the old times, with such vividness as to fill her with melancholy. She recognized some who were graduated thirty years before, when Hanover was her home.

The college portrait gallery was also visited by the writer, and looking out from frames on every side were the faces of men whose names were fa-

* Daughter of Rev. Benjamin Chapman.

miliar as the writer's own, through her mother's reminiscences :—Prof. Shurtliff, President Adams, Rufus Choate, Dr. Mussey, and many others.

The record of the graduation of Rev. Benjamin Chapman, and also that of his son Thomas Fuller Chapman, were readily found upon search of the college archives.



ADDENDUM.

There have been many old manuscript sermons of her father, the Rev. Benjamin Chapman, handed down to the present generation by Mrs. A. S. Rowland. Among them is one apparently in the Rev. Benjamin's hand (though the writing is noticeably immature) which is dated December, 1775. Rev. Benjamin Chapman joined the army of volunteers December, 1776, being at that time a youth of only eighteen years. From internal evidence there is scarcely a doubt that the sermon mentioned was written by him, though in all probability not written for delivery. He must have been expecting even at that time, to enter the ministry; and the mature thought expressed in the sermon is not surprising, when we consider the times in which men were living, and remember how much earlier men in those days matured.* In such an atmosphere

* It is told of Jonathan Edwards that "as a mere child, he read not only the ordinary writings in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, but the most abstruse and subtle writings in English; and at the age of fourteen, being then a sophomore in Yale College, his eye, for the first time, fell upon Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding,"—a book which made an era in the history of his mind, and which he read, even at that youthful period, with a delight greater, he tells us, 'than the most greedy miser finds when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some newly discovered treasure.'"—*Moses Coit Tyler's History of American Literature during the Colonial Time.*

of forced mental development Mr. Chapman had been reared ; and when the stirring events of the Revolution filled all hearts, was it not natural that with his thoughts bent upon his future calling, his pen should indite the sermon from which the following passages are taken ?

The text is from Ephesians 5 : 20 :

“ Giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

. . . “ A thick cloud of dismal aspect hangs over this part of America. Is it not a time when our liberty and that of our posterity is threatened ? A time when our property is demanded to support officers and armies independent of us ? Is not our metropolis thronged with armed forces, and our harbor lined with terrific ships of war, perhaps to frighten us into passive submission ? Have not the Ministers of State and the Parliament of Great Britain, and, I might say, England in general, been of the opinion that they have the power and the right to take our monies from us without consent of ours ? . . . Our public afflictions and distresses throughout the American colonies were never greater than at the present time. 'Tis eminently a day of gloominess and thick darkness. The king and parliament of Great Britain have deemed us rebels and seem firmly determined to exert themselves to the utmost to distress us ; but

notwithstanding all this, have we not great reason to rejoice in the Lord with voice of thanksgiving?

How signal and important the late interpositions of Providence in our favor! . . . Surprising has been the union and harmony of the British Colonies in America. . . . The friendly agreement and union of sentiment of such a number of distinct Colonies has truly been beyond our most sanguine expectations. . . . Again we gratefully acknowledge the hand of God in the wisdom shown by the Continental Congress. So conspicuous in their resolves and addresses, they have not only raised the admiration of the thinking and sensible men of America, but have also excited the wonder of great statesmen in Europe. So much so that even the great and sagacious Pitt questioned whether such another number of men could be found upon the face of the earth, equal in wisdom and skill to the members of the Continental Congress. . . . Again we note our successes gratefully. On the 19th of April last, at the battle of Concord; again at the battle of Charlestown, where so few of our own number fell to the many of the enemy. Again at the islands near Chelsea, where the skill and dexterity of our troops were even admired and applauded by our adversaries. Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Champlain, St. Johns,—all given into our hands! . . .

We are to thank God for his restraints upon men. Now the operation of civil law is suspended, it might have been justly feared that a considerable part of the meaner sort of men would, at such a

time as this, have refused to pay their taxes ; but few of these vile, contemptible men dare appear, and 'tis a pity a mark should not be placed upon them, (abominable as they are), that so long as they live they should be unworthy to mingle in human society. God in his providence has indeed remarkably defeated the designs of our enemies. Let us rejoice in the Lord, and in the God of our salvation."

H. H. R. H.

Harriet R Hamilton

2960

